

## **CIVIL RIGHTS AND AIR TRAVEL**

### *Steps Taken to Ensure New Security Requirements Preserve the Civil Rights of People with Disabilities*

The following excerpts are from a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Fact Sheet about accessibility requirements and provide a few examples of the types of accommodations and services that must be provided. These examples are not all-inclusive and are simply meant to provide answers to frequently asked questions since September 11<sup>th</sup>.

- Air carriers must provide 'meet and assist service' (e.g., assistance to gate or aircraft) at drop-off points. The lack of curbside check-in for certain airlines and at some airports has not changed the requirements for 'meet and assist service' at drop-off points.

- Ticketed passengers with their own oxygen for use on the ground are allowed beyond the screener checkpoints with their oxygen canister once the canisters have been thoroughly inspected. If there is a request for oxygen at the gate for a qualified passenger with a disability, commercial oxygen providers are allowed beyond the screener checkpoints with oxygen canisters once thoroughly inspected.

- The limit of one carry on bag and one personal bag (e.g., purse or briefcase) for each traveler does not apply to medical supplies and/or assistive devices. Passengers with disabilities generally may carry medical equipment, medications, and assistive devices on board the aircraft.

- All persons allowed beyond the screener checkpoints may be searched. This will usually be done through the use of a hand held metal detector, whenever possible. Passengers may also be patted down during security screenings, and this is even more likely if the passenger uses a wheelchair and is unable to stand up. Private screenings remain an option for persons in wheelchairs.

- Service animals, once inspected to ensure prohibited items are not concealed, are permitted on board an aircraft. Any backpack or sidepack that is carried on the animal will be manually inspected or put through the X-ray machines. The service animal's halter may also be removed for inspection.

- Assistive devices such as walking canes, once inspected to ensure prohibited items are not concealed, are permitted on board an aircraft.

Assistive devices such as augmentative communication devices and Braille N Speaks will go through the same sort of security screening process used for personal computers.

- Syringes are permitted on board an aircraft once it is determined that the person has a documented medical need for the syringe.

- Personal wheelchairs and battery-powered scooters may still be used to reach departure gates after they are inspected to ensure that they do not present a security risk. Any backpack or side pack that is carried on the wheelchair will be manually inspected or put through the X-ray machines.



- Personal wheelchairs will still be allowed to be stowed on board an aircraft.

- Air carriers must ensure that qualified individuals with a disability, including those with vision or hearing impairments, have timely access to information, including new security measures the carriers provide to other passengers. Alternative formats are necessary to ensure that all passengers, especially deaf persons, understand new security measures at various airports.

Members of the public who feel they have been the subject of discriminatory actions or treatment by air carriers may file a complaint by sending an email message, a letter or a completed complaint form to:

#### **Aviation Consumer Protection Division**

U.S. Department of Transportation

Room 4107, C-75

Washington, D.C. 20590

E-mail: [airconsumer@ost.dot.gov](mailto:airconsumer@ost.dot.gov)

Complaint forms are available at

[www.dot.gov/airconsumer/problems.htm](http://www.dot.gov/airconsumer/problems.htm)

For more information contact

DCAB at 586-8121 (V/TTY)

E-mail: [accesshi@aloha.net](mailto:accesshi@aloha.net)